

From: [Robert Canales](#)
To: [WebMail - CCD](#)
Subject: Public Comment Access, Speaker Cards, and Election Reform
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Good evening, Mayor and Councilmembers.

My name is Rebecca Canales, and I am speaking tonight in my personal capacity.

I want to address both public comment rules and election reform.

First, on public comment: I understand the need for order and efficiency. The City has to conduct business, and meetings should not become chaotic. But Whittier also has a long tradition of open public comment. Traditionally, residents could listen to the meeting, hear what others said, and then decide to get in line and speak. That openness is part of Whittier's civic culture.

I believe speaker cards can be useful, but they should not automatically lock people out. A reasonable compromise would be to use speaker cards when there are more than 30 speakers, but if there are fewer than 30, the Council should be able to reopen public comment or allow people to line up and speak. That preserves order during large meetings while keeping access open during normal meetings.

I also think Whittier should be careful about removing the traditional expectation that speakers identify themselves. Historically, stating a name and address, or at least city of residence, helped the community know whether comments were coming from Whittier residents or from outside groups trying to influence local policy. Public access and public accountability should go together.

Second, on elections: I am pleased to see term limits and ranked-choice voting being discussed. I have supported both. Term limits can help prevent elected office from becoming a permanent position, and ranked-choice voting can help ensure winners have broader support when there are multiple candidates.

I also urge the Council to preserve Whittier's local control over its elections. Whittier has long administered its own municipal elections. If the City explores ranked-choice voting, it should not assume Los Angeles County's current limitations are the final word. As a charter city, Whittier should at least explore what reforms it can place before voters.

In short, I urge the Council to protect open public comment, use speaker cards as a management tool rather than a barrier, preserve accountability, and move forward with serious consideration of term limits and ranked-choice voting.

Thank you.



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Agenda Item No: _____